Consumer Protection Act

2605. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsreport captioned "sting off consumer law" as appeared in the 'Telegraph' dated 5th July, 2001;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) what measures are proposed to be taken in this regard; and

(d) whether Government would revise the amendments proposed in the Consumer Protection Act to make it effective and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The proposed amendment of section 3 of the Consumer Protection Act 1986, to exclude claims in respect of which corresponding remedies of judicial nature are available under any special law, for the time being in force, is intended to bring clarity and prevent conflict of jurisdiction with other statutes while at the same time ensuring that redressal is available to the consumer for complaints against defective goods or deficient services.

An enabling provision for the payment along with the complaint of such amount of fee as may be prescribed in the Rules, has been included in the proposed amendments to the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 essentially to discourage the filing of frivolous complaints and also to cover part of the expenses on service of notice, etc.

(d) Amendments to the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 have been proposed after the deliberation and discussion with all concerned to make the Act more effective and purposeful.

Modified Public Distribution System

2606. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Planning Commission has shown its dissatisfaction with the present Public Distribution System where the subsidy amount in the preceding year was around Rs.12,500 crores;

(b) if so, whether the State Governments are not very enthusiastic about this scheme as shown by poor off-take by the States and even poorer actual lifting by the Below Poverty Line families;

(c) in view of the above whether any modified Public Distribution System is proposed to be launched whereby active co-operation of the State Government would be ensured; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?